Fertcare®
Progress and Future Issues
Martin Shafron, Environment Manager
Fertilizer Industry Federation of Australia

Outline
• Status
• Milestones
• Future Activities
• Issues
Fertcare

- Training and accreditation program
- Industry-based – AFSA and FIFA
- For people who handle, sell and advise on fertilizers and soil and ameliorant products
- To ensure efficient fertilizer use
- For environmental and farm productivity benefits.

Status

- Three levels of delivery:
  - Level A (logistics)
  - Level B (sales)
  - Level C (advisers)
- Spreading machine performance certification – Accu-Spread
- Currently, 1,320 people trained:
  - 480 Level A
  - 400 Level B
  - 440 Level C
- 148 spreading machines certified.
Key Milestones

• 1998 – AFSA receive NLP grant to develop Codes of Practice (the origin of Fertcare)
• 2002 – AFSA and FIFA commence partnership for expanded Fertcare
• 2003 – Process for developing National Competencies (training standards) commences.

Key Milestones

• 2004 – Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE and Agsafe engaged as Registered Training Organizations
• 2005 – Australian Government (DAFF) provide grant for: awareness; Level C; and farmer competency review.
Key Milestones – 2005

• **Fertspread** (NSW) becomes the first company to become Fertcare accredited
• Fertcare officially launched on lawns of Parliament House.

Key Milestones – 2007

• Recognition of Prior Learning and Maintenance of Accreditation systems finalized for Level C
• Evaluation of the efficacy of Fertcare undertaken for the 1st time
• National competencies for Fertcare units finalized (!).
Future Activities – Targets

• Originally 100% by end 2008
  – Currently <50%
  – Drought part factor
• New targets being developed
  – Including interim targets
  – By Fertcare Champion Network
• Quarterly reporting put in place
  – To coincide with FIFA and AFSA Board and Council meetings.

Fertcare Champions

• Reporting on:
  – numbers staff requiring training and already trained
  – number of spreading machines requiring certification and certified
  – actions taken to promote Fertcare.
• Providing & considering feedback
• Recommending improvements.
Future Activities – Modules

- Complete farmer competency review, including any role for Fertcare
- Fertcare *premises* certification
- Aerial applicator module?

Future Activity – Delivery

- **E-learning** options being explored
- Level A development underway – BRIT
- Level B proposal developed – funding options being explored
- Level C RPL and MoA implemented.
Issues to be Addressed

• ‘Streamlined’ Level A – for logistics supervisors
• Improved access to training – courses, venues
• Greater integration of Fertcare into ag’ industry ‘best practice’ guidelines – Dairy, Tasmanian Farmers and National Greenhouse to date.
• Integration of Fertcare training with company training.
• Updating and enhancing training material

Summary

• Fertcare has come a long way
• Largely thanks to considerable support from the Australian Government
• Work to date has been on building the program
• And there is still some building work to do…
Summary

• The next stage is to improve the way Fertcare is delivered and managed
• To improve its ‘value for money’.
• As an industry program – its essential that members’ views are known
  – Through Fertcare Champions
  – Directly to the FIFA and AFSA executive.

Thank You

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